IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1, 4, 10, 12 and 14, and add new claims 16-18 as follows:

Claim 1. (currently amended) A method of operating a mobile agent that travels through a network of a number of computers, wherein the mobile agent is executed in a sequence of stages and wherein each stage comprises a set of places, the method comprising the following steps:

executing the mobile agent in at least one of the set of places of a respective one of the stages,

evaluating in which place of the respective stage the mobile agent has been executed successfully,

agreeing on ~~this~~ a primary place among the set of places,

aborting and/or undoing any operation in connection with the mobile agent in any other place of the respective stage, and

moving a modified mobile agent resulting from the successful execution to the next stage from at least two forwarding places.

Claim 2. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the steps are repeated for any one of the sequence of stages.

Claim 3. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the mobile agent is executed sequentially in the set of places of the respective stage, and wherein the mobile agent is not executed anymore in subsequent places after successful execution in one of the set of places and agreement on this successful execution.

Claim 4. (currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein a decision is generated in each stage including at least one of ~~a~~ the primary place that corresponds to the place in which the mobile agent has executed successfully, the set of places of the next stage to which the modified mobile agent is moved, ~~and/or~~ and the resulting modified mobile agent.

Claim 5. (original) The method of claim 4 wherein at least one of the primary place and/or the set of places of the next stage and/or the resulting modified mobile agent is confirmed to at least all other places of the respective stage except the primary place.

Claim 6. (original) The method of claim 4 wherein at least one of the primary place and/or the set of places of the next stage and/or the resulting modified mobile agent is moved to all places of the next stage.

Claim 7. (original) The method of claim 6 wherein the move is performed as a reliable forward function.

Claim 8. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the steps are managed by a fault-tolerance enabler (FTE) which is independent of the mobile agent.

Claim 9. (original) The method of claim 8 wherein the FTE travels with the mobile agent to the set of places of the respective stage.

Claim 10. (currently amended) A computer program product comprising program code means for use for operating a mobile agent that travels through a network of a number of computers, wherein the mobile agent is executed in a sequence of stages and wherein each stage comprises a set of places, the computer program product comprising instructions for:

executing the mobile agent in at least one of the set of places of a respective one of the stages,

evaluating in which place of the respective stage the mobile agent has been executed successfully,

agreeing on ~~this~~ a primary place among the set of places,

aborting and/or undoing any operation in connection with the mobile agent in any other place of the respective stage, and

moving a modified mobile agent resulting from the successful execution to the next stage from at least two forwarding places.

Claim 11. (original) Computer program product according to claim 10, wherein the program code means is stored on a computer-readable medium.

Claim 12. (currently amended) A network of a number of computers in which a mobile agent is traveling through, wherein the network comprises a sequence of stages, wherein each stage comprises a set of places, and wherein the mobile agent is executed in at least one of the set of places of a respective one of the stages, the network comprising means for evaluating in which place of the respective stage the mobile agent has

been executed successfully, means for agreeing on ~~this~~ a primary place among the set of places, means for aborting and/or undoing any operation in connection with the mobile agent in any other place of the respective stage, and means for moving a modified mobile agent resulting from the successful execution to the next stage from at least two forwarding places.

Claim 13. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the mobile agent is a computer program that acts autonomously on behalf of an agent owner or user and that travels through a network of a number of computers.

Claim 14. (currently amended) The computer program product of claim ~~11~~ 10, wherein the mobile agent is a computer program that acts autonomously on behalf of an agent owner or user and that travels through a network of a number of computers.

Claim 15. (previously presented) The network of claim 12, wherein the mobile agent is a computer program that acts autonomously on behalf of an agent owner or user and that travels through a network of a number of computers.

Claim 16. (new) The method of claim 1, wherein non-primary places are configured to verify the modified mobile agent has successfully arrived at the set of places of the next stage to which the modified mobile agent is moved.

Claim 17. (new) The computer program product of claim 10, wherein non-primary places are configured to verify the modified mobile agent has successfully arrived at the set of places of the next stage to which the modified mobile agent is moved.

Claim 18. (new) The network of claim 12, wherein non-primary places are configured to verify the modified mobile agent has successfully arrived at the set of places of the next stage to which the modified mobile agent is moved.